

✓ Check Your Child's Car Seat!

Choosing and Using Car Seats Correctly

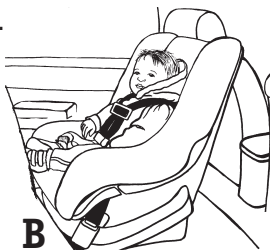
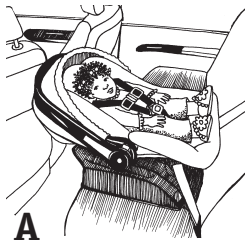
**Child
Safety
Facts**
2005

☐ Is your child using the right car seat?

STAGE 1: Rear-facing seat—use from birth to at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds. Facing the rear is the safest way for a baby or toddler to ride.

Under age 1: Small, infant-only car seats (A) always face the rear. Convertible seats (B) face the rear for babies up to 30 to 35 pounds (check label), then can be faced forward (C).

Over age 1: Can continue rear facing in a convertible seat if the child is under the seat's rear-facing weight limit (30 to 35 pounds) and his head is below the top of the car seat (check label).

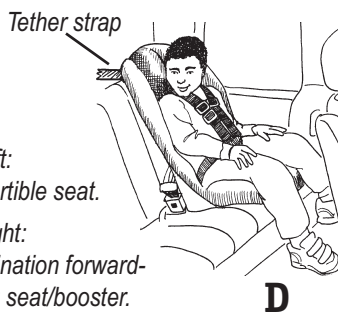


STAGE 2: Forward-facing seat with harness (C, D). Use for a child over age 1, up to 40 to 65 pounds. This may be a convertible seat, a combination forward-facing seat/booster, a built-in car seat, or a vest.



C. Left:
convertible seat.

D. Right:
combination forward-facing seat/booster.



STAGE 3: Booster seat with lap-shoulder belt (E), from 40 pounds to 80 to 100 pounds. Seat belts do **not** fit children correctly until at least age 8. Use if your vehicle has lap and shoulder belts in back. Do not use a booster with a lap-only belt.

In lap belt-only positions, use a car seat for heavier children or a vest, or a harness (see list at, www.saferidenews.com). Use a lap-only belt as a last resort.



RESOURCES:

NHTSA: www.nhtsa.dot.gov, Auto Safety Hotline, 888-DASH-2-DOT
SafetyBelt Safe U.S.A.: 800-745-7233, www.carseat.org
Contact a local car seat inspection station: www.seatcheck.org,
866-SEATCHECK (732-8243)

☐ Is the car seat second-hand?

- **Be careful with used car seats.** Make sure you have the instructions and any recalls have been fixed. Make sure it has not been in a crash, which could cause hidden damage.

☐ Are you following the instructions?

- Always follow instructions for your child's car seat.
- Look in the vehicle owner's manual for tips on installing the seat.

☐ Does your child ride in back?

- **Air Bag Safety:** **Never** put an infant in a rear-facing car seat in front with an air bag. The force of the air bag can kill any child sitting or leaning too close to the dashboard. If the truck or car has an air bag on/off switch, **turn it off** when a child rides in the front seat.
- **The back seat** is much safer than the front. Correctly buckle up children under 13 in the back seat.

☐ Is the car seat tightly installed?

- Put the seat belt in the correct, marked path to hold the seat in place. Make the belt tight, so the car seat moves less than 1 inch forward or side to side.
- OR use LATCH anchors if both vehicle and child seat have them and if the installation is tight. See car seat directions and vehicle manual.
- If a forward-facing car seat has a tether strap (D), attach it to a tether anchor in the vehicle. See car seat directions and vehicle manual.

☐ Are the harness straps snug and in the right slots?

- Adjust harness straps to be snug, so you cannot pinch slack in the straps (an older child should not be able to lean forward). Place the harness retainer clip at armpit level to hold straps on the shoulders.
- For rear-facing seats, shoulder straps go in the slots **at or below** the shoulders.
- For many forward-facing seats, put straps in the top slots or, for combination car seat/boosters, use the slots **at or above** the child's shoulders.

*Make
Every Ride
A Safe Ride*

